1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

Fantan was obviously distressed by the situation but insisted on working with me each day, saying there was nothing he could do at home. When finally wailing was heard from the direction of his house, he knew the child had died. He went home immediately, but it was not considered good form for him to enter the house crowded with wailing women. At last a neighbor went in, took the dead child from its mother's arms, and hurried off alone to bury it in a near-by field. At this point Fantan put his head down on his knees and broke out into hard dry sobs, which he tried to suppress. Weeping is considered unmanly by the culture and therefore he had less outlet than his wife, of whom wailing was expected. Characteristically enough, however, Fantan was able to transform his grief into anger almost immediately, for at that moment a friend arrived to report that his brother-in-law had just killed one of his penned pigs in order to force him to give a death feast, an expense quite unwarranted for so young a child. Fantan said as he started toward his pigpen, "I have had enough expenses. Why should my brother-in-law kill my pig, since he didn't even come to be with his sister when her child died?"

115 593 [576] [764] 115 152 [607]

DESCENT FROM THE HOUSE

Four to six days after the birth the first descent of the mother and child into the outside world is marked by a trivial ceremony in which a few neighboring kinswomen may assist. The maternal grandmother, or some surrogate, plants sweet potatoes and piles stones near the house verandah. The plants and stones may be represented by weeds nd pebbles. By this act she releases both the mother and the father from the restrictions on vigorous labor. A few other precautionary measures may be taken, all within the range of sympathetic magic. The mother then leaves the house and is bathed for the first time since giving birth. Tubesful of water are poured over her back, arms, and legs. That afternoon the father gives a small feast to repay the wife's kin for their contributions and services. For a few more days the mother is inclined to stay near the house and perform only the easier household tasks.

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The descent from the house marks the beginning of a wider diet for the child. At this time premasticated roasted bananas and vegetable gruels are added to breast feeding. The gruel is poured into the mouth from a coconut-shell spoon. The premasticated bananas are given the infant either with the hand or directly from the adult's mouth.

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At this time, too, the infant's contacts expand. He begins to be a center of interest and is passed from hand to hand. Everyone seems entranced by small babies and many people will ask to hold and fondle

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1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

854 them. My impression is that young men were even more inclined to fondle infants than young women, although I made no quantitative study of this. The impression—if accurate and not simply an exaggeration born of the contrast with attitudes in our own culture—might be explained by the greater leisure that young men possess.

The effect of this handling on the psychological development of the child may be expected to vary with the size of the community in which it lives. An infant who spends its life in a remote field house will have fewer contacts with strangers than one brought up on the edge of a dance place in a large community. How far parents recognize this is unknown, but I never saw one who was unwilling to surrender the child to an interested adult and who did not seem pleased at the attention lavished on the baby. Only if the child showed fright or cried vigorously would a parent take it back, usually with a deprecatory smile and the comment that it was afraid.

Fondling in Atimelang consists largely of rocking and joggling the child and of mouthing it. Kissing is not known for either adults or children, but an infant's arms, legs, and whole trunk will be caressed with mock bites of the lips. The procedure is quite evidently, consciously, and significantly an eating gesture. This connection between food and affection is one that recurs repeatedly and in many contexts.

GOING BACK TO WORK

[962 846] Since women are primarily responsible for garden work and the subsistence economy, mothers return to regular field work ten days to two weeks after the birth of the child. It is not customary for the mother to work with the child on her back or even near her, as it is in some societies. Instead the infant is left at home in the care of some kin, for example the father, an older sibling of either sex, or a grandmother whose field labor is less effective or necessary than that of a younger woman.

853 This practice results in great variation in the amount of attention and satisfactory feeding that infants get during this first period of life. Some women have fewer responsibilities than others in the number of people for whom they must provide and are therefore less occupied with field work. Others may have given birth during the early part of the dry season when labor is relatively slack, so that two or three months may pass before they have to resume intensive gardening. Still others may be lazy and use the care of the child as an excuse to slight their field work. But if an infant is left daily in the care of a substitute mother, it is going to be hungry part of the time. The person caring for

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

the infant may give it premasticated food or gruel more or less con- 853
scientiously, but the frequency with which infants spew out such nourishment suggests that the feeding is neither very effective nor satisfactory. One repeatedly sees infants trying to nurse at the breast of a father or immature sibling, who pushes them away gently with an attitude of mild embarrassment.

Sometimes the mother may have a sister or other near kin who also is nursing a child. For a day or two at a time the other woman may take over the care and feeding of both infants, nursing the two simultaneously. I have seen this occur only three times. It is worth noting, however, that other women's breasts are accessible to a child. Certainly every child has been nursed by a number of adult women at one time or another. But these substitutes are no more consistently available than the mother herself.

During the prewalking period the child spends most of its day half 854
sitting, half lying, in a carrying shawl that is slung over one shoulder and under the opposite arm to form a sort of elongated pouch. The carrying shawl supports the infant's head and legs. Here it frequently sleeps as the caretaker wanders about the village. If sleep becomes sound, the child may be laid on the verandah in its shawl. Proper care demands that it should not be left alone even though it is asleep. If it wakes and cries it should be picked up as soon as possible. "Children [845]
should not be allowed to cry for long because it makes them sick. People say children's voices are not strong and if they cry for long they get sore throats." To place a child on the ground is considered gross neglect. One of the pieces of evidence adduced to prove that an outcast woman called Matingma was "crazy," was the fact that she took her child to the field with her and permitted it to sleep on the ground. This convention may have its origin in the recognized danger to infants from pigs, dogs, and pig lice, which are plentiful around any house verandah, but it has been so generalized that Matingma's treatment of her child was strongly condemned even though these hazards were not present in the fields.

When the mother returns from the field in the late afternoon, she 853
usually takes the child immediately to nurse and fondle. For the rest of the evening the child is either in the mother's carrying shawl or on her lap. When the mother is at home and not too busy, she will offer the breast whenever the child is restless. Unfortunately, I made no inquiries about devices the women use to relieve themselves of the pressure on their breasts during the day. I never heard a woman speak of the pleasure of nursing, which probably means no more than that the culture has not emphasized this particular source of physical satisfaction.

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

Chapter 9

Some Personality Determinants in Alorese Culture

BY ABRAM KARDINER

ORG ALORESE culture is not polarized sharply in any one direction. There is no great subsistence difficulty to supply us with a focus. Therefore, instead of leading off from one particular feature of the culture, it is perhaps best to work from the life cycle of the individual and see what successive integrational systems we can identify.

CHILDHOOD

853 In evaluating the kind of care the mother is able to give the child
854 we must bear in mind the economic duties of the mother during the
155 time of the infant's growth. The child is left at home while the mother goes out to care for the garden. Hunger tensions that arise are generally well taken care of either by the appointed nurse or by an older sibling. However, the child does not have the opportunity to form strong attachments to the mother because the whole conditioning is not associated with a constant object.

At this point one may ask: Since the child is conditioned in this particular way, why does not this suffice? As previously noted, an element in the relief of tension, which is of great significance for the child, is the responsiveness and the consistency of the object caring for it. In other words, the child does not react in a predetermined fashion, but here the conditions favoring the recognition of a dependable object to relieve hunger tensions are not built up. Furthermore, the intermittent appearance of the mother in the morning and her reappearance in the evening, separated by a long delay, are likely to accentuate the conception of the mother as a frustrating object. We can therefore conclude that while there is no actual paucity of nourishment, the child is poorly nurtured. Dr. Du Bois has noted that despite conscientious feeding, infants do reject good food. She also noted the fact that infants try unsuccessfully to nurse at the breast of a mother-surrogate, such as the father or an immature sibling, which seems to be a sure indication of an unsatisfied need tension. It must be stressed that breast feeding is available to the child at the earliest stage but that the substitutes just mentioned are no more reliable than is the mother herself. Hunger tensions in earliest infancy are therefore liable to frustration because of the confusion associated with the conditioning.

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

Even though there are these numerous traumata in connection with feeding, weaning is not traumatic. But the readiness with which children suck at objects which resemble breasts is a further indication of the effects of poor maternal care. A child free of hunger tensions can expand the character of its contacts with the mother, and once she becomes a dependable object the child has a reliable buffer against the outer world. If this buffer is absent, nothing but anxiety and inhibitions can result. This shows itself chiefly as a lack of interest both in the outer world and in those ego components through which mastery of it is effected.

Two additional features must be mentioned. First, the mother does not find the feeding of the child particularly pleasurable. This is very likely to be the case when the mother herself has been through the experience that she now imposes on the child. A second point is that in many of the illnesses which the child suffers at this time, it is the father who is blamed for having broken a taboo or one of the abstinences imposed upon him during the early life of the child. In this way the mother escapes a blame which she undoubtedly feels.

The fact that mothers occasionally masturbate their children while feeding them is no commentary on their sex morality but on the fact that the masturbatic activity is used as a palliative; and it is very likely that sexual gratification thus becomes very early in life established as a means of placating the child for frustrations suffered in other directions.

With regard to training the child to walk and talk, little deliberate effort is made. From comparisons with children in our society one can safely deduce the fact that the child is subject to a continuous series of frustrations in its efforts to establish some mastery over the world. This means also that positive and enterprising attitudes toward the world are not developed, for failures foster inhibitions.

While the child is thus not encouraged to strong ego formation in early childhood, there is an extenuating circumstance in the fact that it is not subjected to discipline which it cannot understand. There is a conspicuous absence of restrictive discipline, particularly in connection with anal training. Here it may be noted that the Alorese seem to have no buttock erotic sensitivity or consciousness. This zone is seemingly devoid of significance — nor is it used in punishing children, as is the case in our society. Anal training seems to be synchronous with growth and is taught mainly by example. Hence these activities cannot contribute very much to the formation of the ego ideal.

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

150 mouths they were not angry, but one doesn't know what thoughts people have in their hearts. So we went to live at Kamangmelang after a month or so. Mother made a lean-to [*tolang*] and we lived there.

Padamai [the husband of an older sister, Lonpada] came and said, "Oh, my mother-in-law and my younger siblings are living like this. I had better build them a field house [*tofa*]." So he began to build us a field house at Maihieta. At that time my older sister Falepang had sores all over her legs and couldn't walk; she just crawled. Her body was emaciated. She died before Padamai finished our field house. [Question.] She was a full-grown woman at the time, but she had never married because she had had sores ever since she was small.

At the time Falepang died, Padamai said to my older sister, "Let us go stay with your mother and younger sisters." So they came and stayed at Kamangmelang. Then Lonpada had her first child, Padamani. Those two [Lonpada and Padamai] went to make a garden at Padavi. 159 Later they had a second child, Talpada. Then Lonpada was pregnant 761 again and gave birth to Fuimau; but she had another child in her stom- 854 ach, the child of an evil spirit, and she died of this [i.e., in childbirth]. [Question.] The human child they were afraid would die too if we tried to bring her up. So Malielani said she would take the child to Alurkowati to raise it. When she came to get the child, we all shouted, "Oh, a hawk has carried off this child." Then the child wouldn't die. Malielani had to take the baby out through the thatch instead of the door. This is to fool the evil spirit or the spirits of the dead people who want to take the child. Malielani cared for the child until it could laugh 159 and almost sit up; then it died. At this time Lonpada [the daughter of 853 Padatimang of Dikimpe], who was a relative of ours, wanted to bring it 854 up. Atakari, who was the husband of Malielani, heard of it. He said they were kin too and Malielani had a small child of her own, so that she had better take it and raise them together. She could suckle them both. In the Three Villages people are luckier than in Atimelang in bringing up infants whose mothers have died, so we thought we had better give the child to someone in the Three Villages.

159 [Pause. I said we hadn't yet heard of Melanglang.] One of my grandmothers was called Melanglang, so mother named one of her children after her. [Here Lomani went off into a confused genealogy establishing her relationship with Melanglang and other persons now living. I asked her again about her sister.] I never saw Melanglang. She lived long enough to talk, but I never saw her. I wasn't born yet and so don't remember her.

2: DuBois E-5 (1938-1939) 1941 OF5 Alor OF5

with the best will in the world, can never have more than a superficial insight into peoples of an alien culture.[1]

Lastly, there is so far no very definite knowledge of what ego mechanisms will be employed by the individual in reacting to frustrations associated with different kinds of disciplines and discipliners. However, from the psychoanalysts and the psychiatrists there is a growing insight into personality processes like projection, introjection, sublimation, and so on. I assume these processes to be universal to mankind, although I should expect variations in weighting from culture to culture.[2]

The procedure, therefore, is to consider a basic physiological tension, see how it is acted upon by disciplines of childhood, what repetitions it finds in a variety of contexts and how it is crystallized by (or into) institutional behavior through those personality mechanisms I have assumed to be universal to mankind.

Hunger, as one of the basic and obvious tensions of human beings, everywhere subject to delayed, redirected, and elaborated gratifications, suggests itself as a point of departure for testing the procedure outlined above. The people used for this purpose are the Atimelangers, who belong to a cluster of five mountain villages on the island of Alor in the Netherlands East Indies.[3]

The experiences of the Atimelang child with hunger and food are to be considered first. Immediately after birth the mother takes the child in her arms and offers it the breast to suckle at will. From four to six days after birth the mother remains in the house with the infant rather constantly in her arms. When the umbilical cord has dried and dropped off, the mother and child leave the house for the first time and from then onward the child is offered in addition to its mother's milk many different kinds of premasticated foods and vegetable gruels. Any refusal of the child to nurse freely and frequently when opportunity offers during this first period of life is considered a serious symptom of ill health and gives rise to considerable concern in parents. After the first week the child is given adult diet as fast as it will take it, and a child of about eighteen months can often be seen at a feast alternately nursing and sucking a cube of boiled pork fat.

Since, however, women are primarily responsible for garden work and the subsistence economy of the Atimelangers, they return to regular field work often ten days to two weeks after the birth of a child. It is not customary for the mother to work with the child on her back or even near her, as it is in some societies, so the infant is left at home in the care of some kin, usually the father or older sibling. There is great variation in solicitude and effectiveness of feeding care received by infants from these substitute mothers. Also some wom-

[1] I am indebted to Dr A. Kardiner and some of his colleagues for their insistence on the need of repetition in many contexts to set certain personality trends.

[2] For a discussion of these mechanisms see Anna Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* (London, 1937).

[3] The material used in this article was collected by the writer during eighteen months of residence on the island of Alor, extending from January 1938 through June 1939. Acknowledgments are gratefully made to the Social Science Research Council of Columbia University and to Dr A. Kardiner who made this work possible.

2: DuBois E-5 (1938-1939) 1941 OF5 Alor OF5

en have greater responsibilities than others in the number they must provide for and are therefore more pressed by field work. On the other hand some women may have given birth during the middle of the dry season when labor in the fields is slack. Still others may be lazy about gardening. As a result some infants receive more care and food during the first months of life. If an infant is left in the hands of a father or sibling, it is going to be fairly hungry part of that time. The person caring for the child may give it gruel or premasticated food more or less conscientiously, but to judge from the frequency with which infants spew out such nourishment, one may suggest that such feeding is not very effective or satisfactory. One repeatedly sees infants trying to nurse at the breast of a father or immature sibling only to be pushed away with an attitude of mild embarrassment.

Rilpada told an anecdote of his childhood which reveals both the frustration infants may suffer from this type of feeding as well as the older sibling's frequent resentment of the role of nurse maid.

> Once mother and I were living in a field house near our gardens. She told me to carry Senmani [younger brother] while she worked. At noon he was hungry and wanted to nurse. I gave him food but he only vomited it. He cried and cried and wouldn't stop. I cried too. Finally I went and told mother to come and nurse him but she wouldn't. So I took Senmani, laid him down on a mat in the house and ran off to Folafeng. There from the ridge I shouted, "Mother, your child lies in the house. If you want to care for it, good. If you don't want to, that is also good. I am going to Atimelang to play."

The point to be made is that even during infancy, when children are quite generally delighted-in, and when they are rarely out of someone's arms, or at least someone's carrying shawl, gratification of hunger is frequently a disappointing experience. Feeding is irregular; intervals between nursing are so long that acute hunger may arise with either no means of gratifying it or gratification is offered in foods obviously less satisfactory than that which the mother offers. When the mother is home and not too busy, she will offer the child the breast whenever it is restless. However, I never heard any woman speak of the pleasure of nursing, which probably means no more than that the culture has not maximized this particular physical pleasure. Women, when asked, did generally say that they preferred child bearing to intercourse but almost invariably added, "Because children will give my funeral feasts." There were several women who said that they did not wish any more children because feeding them meant so much work. Economic organization, therefore, acts directly upon attitudes toward children and conditions the child's earliest experiences in respect to food in this society.

In Atimelang, therefore, the hunger tension of infants is not maximally met as in some societies where children are constantly in contact with their mothers and where the pattern of nursing is a consciously fostered gratification of both mother and child.

A still more serious feeding problem may arise when the child begins to walk, approximately between the thirteenth and eighteenth months. By the time it can manage to get about alone, it is left to play near the house or on the dance place in the center of the village.

2: DuBois E-5 (1938-1939) 1941 OF5 Alor OF5

An older sibling, real or classificatory, or an old woman may be near and will care for a whole group of children in a desultory fashion but no one is responsible for feeding the child and no one is greatly incommoded by his crying. When the mother goes off to work, the child is left from about eight in the morning until five in the afternoon without regular provision of food. This does not mean that he is left entirely without food, but that all he gets during that time may be odd bits an older child cedes more or less willingly and generously to him when he begs for it. Again, of course, there is marked variation in children's experiences during this period. They may have a solicitous older sister who can be spared from field work and who will provide relatively good care. There may be a grandmother who works less hard and frequently in the gardens. But, in any case, after the child learns to walk, his frustrations with respect to hunger are increased, and simultaneously he loses the constant handling and support he had during the first stage of life in the carrying shawl. That the acquisition of his first skill in the independent mastery of the outer world, i.e. walking, should be associated with two severe deprivations may well have larger personality repercussions in the realm of ego development than there is space to consider in this paper.

To add to the strain of this period and to reinforce it further, the weaning of the child may be hastened at this time because another sibling is expected. Rarely does one see a child of three or four still nursing. Although weaning is done simply by pushing the child away gently or placing the breast beyond its reach, there is no doubt that difficulties accumulate at this stage of development. Anal training, walking, and talking have not yet been deliberately instituted. They are allowed to take their own course. In other words, the child has acquired few skills during the first two or three years of life. Those which he has acquired have been by means of restrictive or absorptive disciplines. It is not surprising that this is the time par excellence of temper tantrums. These continue, as might be expected, with marked individual variation up to the ages of five to eight. Adult reactions to childrens' tantrums are characterized by great inconsistency. One day a mother will ignore the child; the next she may be irritated and strike it; on still another occasion she may deceive it into thinking she is not deserting it, only to slip away when the child has been diverted; or on still other occasions, especially at night, the child may be threatened with the local bogy-man who, incidentally, is not a very fearsome figure. In addition then to their inconsistency, all active disciplines are of the restrictive type. I have never seen a mother promise a child a reward for being good and then keep her promise.

A clear example of the needs of early childhood and the uncertainties of the persons on whom the child depends for its gratifications is found in a series of statements contained in Tilapada's autobiography. She tells of caring for a younger sister called Maliemai.

> On the way [to the fields] Maliemai cried a lot, so I put her down and slapped her. Then I talked nicely to her and we went on when she was quiet. . . . When Maliemai was a little older, she would cry to go to the fields with me. If I were not angry with her, I would take her along with me to dig sweet potatoes. I would give her the big ones and keep the small ones. She was always crying. She cried to be fed; she cried to go places. I hit her on the head with my knuckles and then I would feed her. She cried because she was hungry.